



## CANADIAN FOOD INNOVATION NETWORK AWARDS OVER \$370K TO FOUR SOUTHERN ONTARIO FOODTECH COMPANIES

*The funding, provided through FedDev Ontario, will support pilot projects that help validate and commercialize innovative technologies across Canada's food supply chain*

GUELPH, ON, June 9, 2026 — The [Canadian Food Innovation Network \(CFIN\)](#) is awarding up to \$373,193 to four southern Ontario-based startups through the third intake of the Ontario Food Technology Pilot (OFTP) program. Delivered by CFIN and funded by the Government of Canada through the [Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario \(FedDev Ontario\)](#), the program helps early-stage companies validate and demonstrate new technologies that address post-farmgate challenges in the food supply chain.

With matching contributions from industry partners, the projects represent a combined value of approximately \$746,000. The selected pilots span food safety, supply chain logistics, and institutional foodservice, demonstrating how early-stage companies are validating practical tech-enabled solutions that can strengthen efficiency, resilience, and competitiveness across Ontario's food sector.

### **The Ontario Food Technology Pilot funding recipients are:**

**Project Lead:** [Twish Cart](#) (Ottawa, ON)

**Project Title:** AI-Powered Grocery Demand Pooling and Supplier Allocation Pilot

**Funding:** \$100,000

### **Project Summary:**

Twish Cart is piloting a patent-pending, AI-powered platform that aggregates household grocery demand into volume-qualified purchasing pools for distributors and suppliers. Through testing in real-world retail and community pickup environments, the project will validate how

demand pooling can reduce food waste, improve affordability, and support scalable adoption across the food supply chain.

**Project Lead:** [Index Biosystems](#) (Burlington, ON)

**Project Title:** Proactive Food Safety through Operational Spatial Intelligence

**Funding:** \$97,193

**Project Summary:**

Index Biosystems is piloting a food safety technology that allows manufacturers to see how contamination risks move through real production environments and how effective cleaning processes truly are. The system uses physical, DNA-labeled tracers — called BioTags® — to trace material flow, sanitation performance, and hard-to-clean zones across a facility. Through pilots in Ontario food manufacturing plants, the project will validate this technology as a practical tool for benchmarking cleanability, identifying hidden food safety risks, and supporting more proactive, data-driven sanitation and facility design decisions.

**Project Lead:** [Curry Fresh Canada](#) (Brantford, ON)

**Project Title:** Expanding Pressure-Sterilized Fresh Foods into New Categories

**Funding:** \$90,000

**Project Summary:**

Curry Fresh Canada is piloting the expansion of its Turmeric-Assisted Pressure Sterilization (TAPS) technology into new food categories beyond sauces and curries. Working with a co-packing partner, the project will validate applications across fresh and prepared foods—including dips, salads, soups, breads, raw proteins, and global cuisines—supporting broader commercialization and reduced reliance on frozen storage.

**Project Lead:** [Cardwatch](#) (Newmarket, ON)

**Project Title:** AI-Enabled Culinary and Nutrition Intelligence for Institutional Foodservice

**Funding:** \$86,000

**Project Summary:**

Cardwatch is developing and piloting an AI powered culinary and nutrition intelligence platform designed for senior living, healthcare, and institutional foodservice operations. The project will evaluate how AI driven recipe digitization, nutrition analysis, allergen detection, and menu intelligence can reduce manual workload, improve dietary accuracy, support food safety compliance, and help foodservice teams make faster and more informed operational decisions.

**QUOTES**

“The Ontario Food Technology Pilot is built to help food innovators navigate the hardest step in commercialization: proving that a new technology works inside real food operations. These four projects will help companies generate practical evidence on performance and integration, so adoption decisions can be made with confidence. From there, productivity gains can follow through improved food safety, reduced manual work, and more efficient delivery of food.”

– **Dana McCauley, CEO, Canadian Food Innovation Network**

“Southern Ontario’s food innovators are developing cutting-edge technologies that can improve how food is processed, distributed and delivered. Through investments like this, the Government of Canada is helping companies validate made-in-Canada solutions, strengthen agri-food supply chains, boost productivity and build a more competitive and resilient food sector.”

– **The Honourable Evan Solomon, Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario**

“Twish Cart is building a smart, everyday food access system for Canadian families. This support allows us to leverage AI and Machine Learning technologies to help communities and food businesses pool demand more efficiently, lower grocery costs, reduce waste, and create stronger connections between consumers, suppliers, and local food systems.”

– **El Gibbor, CEO, Twish Cart**

"FSQA teams can follow best practice and do everything right — but the existing toolkit leaves gaps. Traditional tools are fundamentally reactive — they alert you when something has gone

wrong, but they don't show the full picture: how contamination actually traveled, where hidden risk is building, or whether your cleaning program is performing the way you think it is. That's a tooling gap, not a people gap. With CFIN's support, this project is about closing it — giving Ontario manufacturers the evidence to move from reactive response to proactive prevention, and ultimately predictive food safety programs."

— **David Singer, Co-Founder, Index Biosystems**

"CFIN is a one-stop shop for getting integrated into the Canadian food ecosystem. Their UFO cohort introduced us to various stakeholders here and this grant will expand the footprints of TAPS in Canada."

— **Priya Ranjan Dass, Founder & MD**

"Foodservice teams in healthcare and senior living are under increasing pressure to do more with less while maintaining dietary accuracy and resident satisfaction. This project represents an important step toward bringing practical AI tools into daily culinary operations in a way that supports both staff efficiency and quality of care."

— **Vu Nguyen, CTO, Cardwatch**

## **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

The **Ontario Food Technology Pilot** provides non-repayable funding to help early-stage companies validate and demonstrate innovative food technologies developed in southern Ontario. By supporting in-market pilot projects across processing, foodservice, retail, and distribution, the program reduces cost and risk, accelerates commercialization, and strengthens industry collaboration around high-impact, post-farmgate innovations.

Eligible projects are led by Ontario-based foodtech businesses with under \$5 million in annual revenue and advance technologies at Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 6–9. The program supports pilot projects that align with CFIN's national innovation priorities, including food manufacturing technology, digital supply chains, packaging, circularity, and foodservice innovation.

## **ABOUT THE CANADIAN FOOD INNOVATION NETWORK**

The Canadian Food Innovation Network (CFIN) is a national organization that's stimulating transformative and transferrable innovation within the Canadian food sector. Since 2021, CFIN has awarded more than \$22,301,276 (matched by \$25,138,939 in industry investment) to 122 Canadian foodtech projects that derisk new technologies that will make the food sector more competitive. CFIN-funded companies have generated \$90 million in economic impact and created over 355 jobs and co-op placements. Our funding recipients have attracted more than \$82 million in follow-on investment.

With 8,500 members and counting, CFIN has built the fastest growing and most engaged food business community in the country and our members come from across the globe, representing all parts of the food value chain. [CFIN's free membership](#) includes access to exclusive funding programs, five Regional Innovation Directors, and [YODL](#).

### **[ABOUT FEDDEV ONTARIO](#)**

Since 2009, the Government of Canada, through [FedDev Ontario](#), has worked to advance and diversify the southern Ontario economy through funding opportunities and business services that support innovation, growth and job creation in Canada's most populous region. The Agency has delivered impressive results, which can be seen in southern Ontario businesses that are creating innovative technologies, improving productivity, growing revenues, creating jobs, and in the economic advancement of communities across the region. Learn more about the impact the Agency is having in southern Ontario by exploring our [investment profiles](#), our [Southern Ontario Spotlight](#), and FedDev Ontario's [X](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) accounts.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

[Ontario Food Technology Pilot](#)

[CFIN Membership](#)

[CFIN Media Page](#)

[CFIN Media Kit](#)

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